

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

Short-term health risks

- High heat and humidity in the south
- Water contaminated with raw sewage
- Air pollution in urban areas
- Poor/congested road conditions
- Rock/mud slides common in mountainous areas

Long-term health risks

- Air pollution in urban areas
- Water contaminated with industrial pollutants

HAZARDOUS ANIMALS AND PLANTS

Venomous Snakes – Numerous deadly snakes inhabiting lowlands; death within hours; seek urgent medical attention!

Prevention – Do not handle *any* snake.

Mammals – Aggressive monkeys, bears, boars inhabiting upland forests

Prevention – Do not feed or handle *any* animals.

Wasps, Spiders, Centipedes – May be large, numerous, and/or highly poisonous

Prevention – sting medications; shake out boots/clothing/bedding; seek medical attention if bitten/ stung.

Leeches – Nuisance in freshwater bodies and forests; infection may occur at attachment sites.

Prevention – DEET on exposed skin

Marine Animals – Numerous poisonous sea snakes, fish, jellyfish, sea urchins

Prevention – Swim at approved beaches; do not handle; seek medical attention if stung/bitten.

Hazardous Plants – Numerous toxic plants; skin/lung irritation if touched/burned; poisoning if chewed/eaten

Prevention – Do not touch, chew, eat, or burn unfamiliar plants; wash contaminated skin/clothing after contact.

HIGH ELEVATIONS

Two-thirds of the country consists of hills and mountains with several peaks above 9,842 feet.

Operations at 6,000 feet can impact unit and individual effectiveness.

Signs of **altitude sickness**: headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, fatigue, irritability, coughing

High Elevations (Continued)

Acclimatization:

- Staged ascent: Ascend to moderate altitude (5,000–8,000 feet) and remain there for 3 days before ascending higher.
- Graded ascent: Limit daily altitude to allow partial acclimatization. Spend 2 nights at 9,000 feet and limit to no more than 1,000 feet per day above each night's sleep.

Treatment: The preferred method to treat any high altitude illness is to evacuate the individual to a lower altitude. See GTA 08-05-060, *A Soldier's Guide to Staying Healthy at High Elevations*.

DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED

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DEPLOYMENT HEALTH GUIDE: TAIWAN



This country-specific guide should be used in conjunction with [GTA 08-05-062, *Guide to Staying Healthy*](#), and is intended to provide information that can help reduce your risk of Disease and Non-battle Injuries (DNBI) when deployed. This health threat and countermeasure information is based on the most current data available from U.S. Department of Defense medical agencies at the time of production. In addition to the information in this guide, you should also receive force health protection, health threat, and preventive medicine countermeasures training/briefings prior to and, as required, throughout the length of your deployment.

TAIWAN OVERVIEW

Location – Taiwan is an island off the southeastern coast of China.

Climate – Tropical climate with average daily temperatures between 86° F (April – October) and 59° F (November – March). Cloudiness is persistent and extensive all year.

Humidity – 75 to 90 percent all year

Rainfall – 102 inches a year with a rainy season from June to August

Terrain – Two-thirds of Taiwan consists of heavily forested, mostly rugged mountains with flat to gently rolling and densely populated plains in the west.

Forces of Nature – Earthquakes, usually small, occur in the Pacific Ocean. Tropical cyclones occur from May through September.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Taiwan is at **INTERMEDIATE RISK*** for infectious diseases. Without force health protection measures, mission effectiveness will be adversely impacted.

*Based on a combination of all major infectious diseases that occur in a country, the Armed Forces Medical Intelligence Center (AFMIC) assigns an **overall country risk level** of low, intermediate, high, or very high risk, as compared to other countries.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Food-borne and Water-borne Diseases

Consuming contaminated food, water, or ice

Diarrhea, bacterial – A potential attack rate of 1 to 10 percent a month if local food, water or ice is consumed

- Threat highest during warm months; countrywide
- Symptoms – loose, watery or explosive bowel movements
- 1–3 days recovery with antibiotics

Hepatitis A – Rare cases possible among unvaccinated personnel if local food, water of ice is consumed

- Threat year-round; rural areas
- Symptoms – none to flu-like illness
- Severe, 1–4 weeks recovery, sometimes initially requiring hospitalization

Typhoid/Paratyphoid fever – Rare cases possible among unvaccinated personnel consuming local food, water or ice

- Threat year-round; countrywide

Food-borne and Water-borne Diseases (Continued)

- Symptoms – fever, constipation, headache
- 1–7 days hospitalization

Other risks: **Lung, liver, intestinal flukes/roundworms**

Prevention: Consume only U.S. military-approved food, water, ice; **hepatitis A vaccine** and/or **typhoid vaccine**, if directed by medical authority.

Vector-borne Diseases

Japanese encephalitis – Small number of cases possible

- Highest threat – April through October; rural areas near pig farms/rice paddies
- Symptoms – mild to severe with permanent disability or death
- Transmission – night-biting mosquitoes

Dengue – Small number of cases possible

- Highest threat – April through October; in/around homes, especially in urban areas
- Symptoms – high fever, severe muscle pain, severe headache, rash; hospitalization likely
- Transmission – day-biting mosquitoes

Others: **Lyme disease (tick-borne)**, **scrub typhus (mite-borne)**, **murine typhus (flea-borne)**

Prevention: **DEET** on exposed skin, **permethrin-treated uniforms**, **permethrin-treated bed nets**.

Animal Contact Diseases

Q Fever – Breathing airborne dust contaminated with body fluids of barnyard animals; rare cases possible

- Threat year-round; rural areas
- Symptoms – none to flu-like illness
- 1–7 days hospitalization

Prevention: Avoid contact with domestic animals/barnyards.

Respiratory Diseases

Tuberculosis – Breathing contaminated air droplets from other people (coughing/sneezing)

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Highest threat from prolonged close contact with local populations
- Symptoms – none to cough, chest pain, breathlessness, night sweats

Respiratory Diseases (Continued)

- Severe illness or death if not treated

Prevention – Avoid close contact with local populations; early detection/treatment.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Hepatitis B – Unprotected sexual contact with infected person; contact with infected blood/body fluids. A small number of cases are possible, although infection rates in prostitutes are among the highest in the world.

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Symptoms – jaundice, fatigue, nausea
- 1–4 weeks recovery; occasional hospitalization; possible permanent liver damage

Gonorrhea/Chlamydia – Unprotected sexual contact with infected person; high number cases possible

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Symptoms (in men) – none to burning sensation when urinating or discharge
- Symptoms (in women) – none to burning when urinating to increased vaginal discharge
- Mild; outpatient treatment

HIV/AIDS – Unprotected sexual contact with infected person; contaminated needles; rare cases possible

- Threat year-round; countrywide
- Symptoms – weight loss, night sweats, fatigue, swollen lymph glands, sores
- Very severe for individual; death likely

Prevention: Abstinence; latex condoms; not sharing needles; **hepatitis B vaccine**, if directed by medical authority.

Water Contact Diseases

Leptospirosis – Wading, swimming, other contact with water/mud contaminated with infected animal urine; rare cases possible

- Threat year-round, higher during flooding; rural areas
- Symptoms – fever, chills, nausea
- 1–7 days hospitalization

Prevention: Do not swim/wade in unapproved water; wash skin and clothing after exposure to freshwater streams/ponds.